

May-August 2007

Akron



DRUMMING UP SUCCESS

Steel Drums Bring Good Vibrations for Kenmore Firm

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Beautiful Seeds!**

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**NEIGHBORS DAY
IS MAY 26**

**Akron Firms Make Capital
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**Akron Performs! Your Summer
Schedule of the Performing Arts**

From the Mayor...

Fight Back, Akron!

We can't ignore the recent news from North Canton that another thousand jobs are headed South. Leaving our community for good. There is not a single day that we at City Hall don't realize that we are in the global fight of our lives to keep jobs and attract new high-paying jobs.

That is one of the reasons that I decided in January, that after 26 years, Akron must ask voters to increase our income tax rate by one-third of one percent. It's Issue 17 on the May 8 ballot. Here's why I'm asking for your support:

AKRON MUST FIGHT BACK AGAINST CRIME

With passage of the increase, Akron will hire 25 additional full-time police officers. We will also buy more equipment to keep our police force among the most modern in the state. The FBI consistently ranks Akron as the safest big-city in Ohio, and unlike many cities, Akron has never laid off a member of the safety forces in 26 years. Years ago, we received our federal income tax dollars from Washington to hire the equivalent of what would be 30 police officers today. But that COPS program was eliminated by the federal government.

AKRON MUST FIGHT BACK TO KEEP JOBS

According to independent reports, Akron is best positioned to take advantage of the new high-tech economy among Ohio's major cities. That's because we have invested substantial amounts of money over the last 21 years to create industrial parks, pay for new streets and utilities that businesses need to grow, and we've spent money to help train the workforce of the future. But there is not a single day that another community somewhere isn't trying to lure jobs away from Akron by offering deals that we must match to keep jobs here. We once received an average of \$3 million yearly in federal

Urban Development Action Grants that helped provide jobs at the Goodyear Technical Center, Quaker Square, and the Sweitzer Industrial Park. Congress has eliminated this program.

AKRON MUST FIGHT BACK TO IMPROVE OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

We will dedicate \$5 million per year from the new tax rate increase to improve streets, to maintain parks, to fix flooding problems, to spur construction of new housing, and to improve our after-school programs at the new Community Learning Centers. Akron's after-school programs keep kids in the school buildings after 3 p.m., off the streets and out of trouble. More importantly, the kids who participate in City-sponsored after-school programs have seen their test scores improve dramatically.

Issue 17 requires that money from this new tax rate increase be spent **ONLY** for:

- *hiring, training and equipping police officers*
- *improving neighborhoods*
- *keeping and creating jobs*
- *addressing flood problems*
- *operating Community Learning Centers in off-school hours*
- *paying costs relating to providing such improvements.*

A LITTLE BIT GOES A LONG WAY

This is not a property tax, and there is no tax on retirement income such as pensions, social security, 401(k)s, 403(b)s, interest & dividends, annuities or insurance. Only people who are employed in the city of Akron or its JEDDs and earn income at a job pay the tax. Akron businesses also pay the tax. A worker who makes \$30,000 per year will pay about \$100

more for the whole year.

Akron hasn't asked for an increase in its tax rate for City operations since 1981. Over the last 26 years, while Congress has cut federal tax rates for everyone, they've also cut the programs that helped support our fight against crime and the fight for jobs. In today's dollars, that's \$60 million dollars that we once received, that we did not get in 2006.

We've cut our expenses significantly. Akron has employed technology to do our service jobs better. Our employee teams have suggested how they can work smarter and save money. In 1981, there were more than 3,000 City of Akron employees. Today, there are 2,242.

FIGHT BACK TO KEEP OUR EMPLOYERS GROWING IN AKRON!

With the help that this tax rate increase will provide – we can keep our employers growing. First Energy, Sterling and Goodyear have made commitments to expand their headquarters operations in Akron with the city's help, and Lockheed-Martin has benefitted from city investments in infrastructure. Like all multi-national companies these days, it's plain to see that our companies are also being courted by other communities who offer financial incentives to try and steal jobs away from our area. Look what happened to Hoover. Akron, we must fight back! Please support Issue 17 on May 8. Thank you.

How Issue 17 monies will be used each year:

Additional Police Officers	2.5 million
Neighborhood Improvements	3.6 million
Additional After-School Programs	1.0 million
Flood Control	1.0 million
Replacement of Equipment (Safety forces & Service)	1.0 million
Keeping and Creating Jobs	9.0 million



Akron City

Akron City is produced three times a year. The magazine and recycling calendar is distributed by U.S. Mail to all residents of Akron by Keep Akron Beautiful, a not-for-profit corporation in the state of Ohio, Paula Davis, director.

Additional copies of the magazine and recycling calendar are available through;
Keep Akron Beautiful
850 E. Market Street
330-375-2116
e-mail: KeepAkronBeautiful@ci.akron.oh.us

Our Cover Photo...

...is **Bruce Ford's** photo of the principals of Kenmore's Panyard (See story on page 5). Left to right are Steve Lawrie, Ron Kerns, Angel Bice, and Ronnie Drouin.

Tell us what you think by replying to editor@ci.akron.oh.us

Or share your thoughts with the mayor at mayor@ci.akron.oh.us

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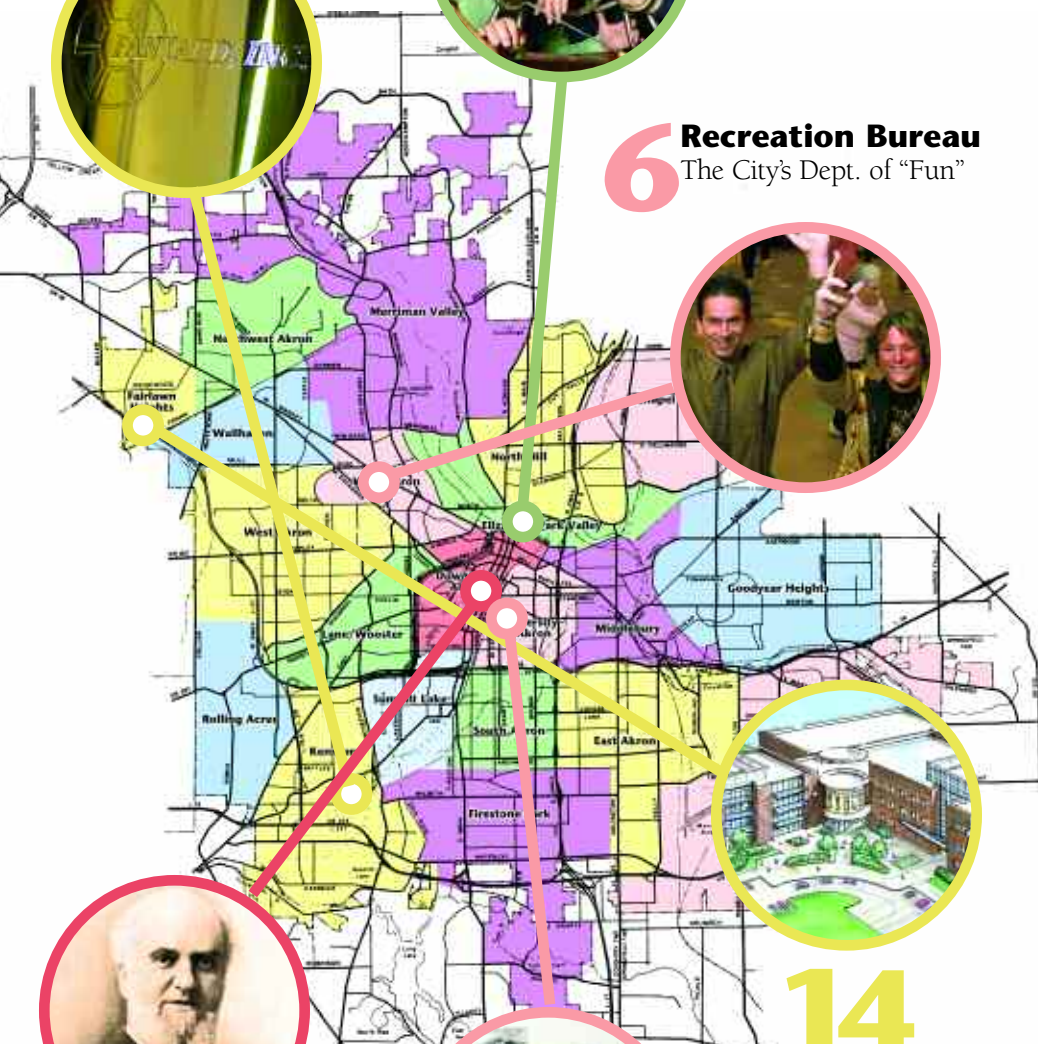
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Let's Get Neighborly!

A Better, Safer, Friendlier City is Goal of May 26 Event

By Billy Soule

There was a time in America, perhaps 50 years ago, when everyone in a neighborhood knew each other and greeted their neighbors from their front porches or over the back fence.

Times have changed. Many of us live in a world that is limited by the boundaries of our property, and we often know very little about the people living next door or across the street.

Some experts ask: Has this self-imposed isolation made us more vulnerable to vandalism and street crimes?

Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic has found that isolation is becoming a reality for Akron residents. But on a recent trip with other mayors to England, he learned that people all over Europe are taking steps to reverse the isolation in their own communities. Many European countries have now designated a day that helps residents get to know each other better. Known as "Neighbours Day," it will be celebrated in Europe on May 29.

If Neighbors Day works on that side of the Atlantic, thought Plusquellic, why not here?

Thus, on Saturday, May 26 — the beginning of our Memorial Day weekend — Akron will celebrate its first Neighbors Day Akron with the theme, "Living Together Better." Residents are asked to take time on that day to host an activity and welcome neighbors to join them. Here are a few suggestions:

- Invite neighbors over for tea and coffee

"Neighbors Day Akron can start small, neighbor-to-neighbor, and we can create a better, safer and friendlier city for all of us by simply getting to know those who live around us a little better."




- Have a cookout and invite the folks on your block
- Organize a pot luck picnic or an ice cream social
- Host games or sports for neighborhood children (adults can get to know each other while children play)
- Organize a neighborhood cleanup day
- Weed or plant flowers in a public space or for a neighbor in need
- Organize a Neighbors Day Akron street celebration

Plusquellic believes Neighbors Day Akron will serve more than one purpose. "A city is a collection of communities and our communities are a collection of people," Plusquellic says. "Neighbors Day Akron can start small, neighbor-to-neighbor, and we can create a better, safer and friendlier city for all of us by simply getting to know those who live around us a little better."

No special investment is required to partici-

pate in Neighbors Day Akron. Ideas are available online at www.neighborsdayakron.org or by calling the City's information center at 3-1-1 (or from any telephone, 330-375-2311) to receive a kit detailing how you can participate and create a successful event. Kits are limited. For neighbors who are more ambitious, a special permit can be secured from the Service Director's office to close your street that day to hold a block-long celebration.

The City's partners in Neighbors Day Akron include Acme Fresh Markets, Metro Transit, the Rubber City Radio Group and Clear Channel Outdoor. Informational pamphlets are also available at City of Akron Community Centers, fire stations, Akron-Summit County Public Library locations and on Metro buses.

"With Neighbors Day Akron," notes Plusquellic, "We are encouraging those very relationships that make living in our City more enjoyable." 

Kenmore's Panyard, Inc. Finding Rhythm of Success in Steel Drum Making

By Mary Davidson



Panyard founder Ron Kerns, the driving force behind the company, shares the ins and outs of pan-making with a group of students.

Next time you're in the Kenmore neighborhood, with its all-American mix of post-war homes and small businesses, don't be surprised if you detect a hint of the islands in the air. There's a distinct Calypso rhythm rocking California Avenue, home of the world's largest and fastest growing steel drum manufacturer. Panyard, Inc., founded in 1990 by University of Akron music students, has recently taken its song of success again from the top—and in double time.

The company, which employs six full-time and several part-time workers, just launched its first product designed to attract novices to the joys of playing steel drums, also known as pans. (Panyards are the places drummers gather to practice and store equipment.) Its Jumbie Jam, which went on the market in March, is designed for children, but is an authentic, Trinidadian-style drum. It comes with a guide, songbook and play-along compact disk. And its price of less than \$300 stands in contrast to \$1,000-plus for an adult-sized pan.

Pans are traditionally expensive because it takes about 100 hours to make a single drum. Also, drum makers are typically working musicians who manufacture on the side. Panyard's staff had confidence that they could produce the same high-quality drums in a cost-effective and efficient way, enabling larger-scale production and a more affordable price. The initial rollout was 300 Jumbie


Jams, but the firm will soon be producing about 1,000 of the children's drums each month. Panyard believes that many of the processes and technologies developed in the creation of the children's drum will translate well to the manufacture of adult-sized drums.

Panyard is currently looking for additional space in the Akron area to accommodate its expanding operations. Company officers have considered relocating, most recently to New Mexico, but have decided to stay here.

"The center of steel drum manufacture in the world will be wherever we are," said Steve Lawrie, a South African computer scientist and musician who moved to the U.S. to work for Panyard in 2000.

Akron has been key to the development of steel drum music in the U.S. since 1980 when the University of Akron formed one of this country's first college-based steel drum bands. While studying music at UA, Panyard founder Ron Kerns hatched the idea for the company, which also transcribes steel drum music.

The drum segment is one of the fastest growing in the \$7.8 billion music products industry, according to NAMM, a music industry trade group. Experts attribute that, in part, to studies showing drum playing not only nurtures creativity but also has significant physical and mental health benefits.

For more information on the Jumbie Jam or Panyard, Inc., visit www.panyard.com or call 300-745-3155. 

Neighborhoods Downtown



Kelly Steele and Doug Moore

KD's Bistro @ Northside Hits All the Right Notes

By Robert Sberna


Got an appetite for live blues and tasty food?

Enjoy both at the Northside, a North Main Street music venue that also features made-from-scratch burgers, pasta, and appetizers. The Northside, opened by developer Mike Owen in 1995, has become a well-known showcase for blues and jazz bands. The club's restaurant, KD's Bistro @ Northside, was launched last year by Kelly Steele and her partner Doug Moore.

KD's Bistro serves up Southern classics such as jambalaya and Cajun cuisine along with health-conscious options such as salads and wraps. "Everything is made to order with fresh ingredients," Steele notes.

Noting that KD's Bistro is only two blocks from downtown, Steele is optimistic about the growth of the surrounding area, which is known as the Northside Arts and Entertainment District. She explains that the new Northside Lofts condominium project will spur the area's transformation into a neighborhood—rather than just a destination.

Steele and Moore also oversee the Red Light Galleries, a cluster of interactive art studios on the second floor of the Northside. "We have resident artists working upstairs," Steele says. "The public is welcome to visit the galleries, interact with the artists, and watch them create." Red Light Galleries is open evenings Tues. through Sat. She adds that each Saturday, beginning May 5, a classic car show and art festival will be held in the Northside parking area.

KD's Bistro @ Northside is located at 111 N. Main St. and is open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mon. through Thurs., and 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fri. and Sat. (330) 434-7625 

Fun, Fitness, Fine Arts

Recreation Bureau Offers Activities For All Ages



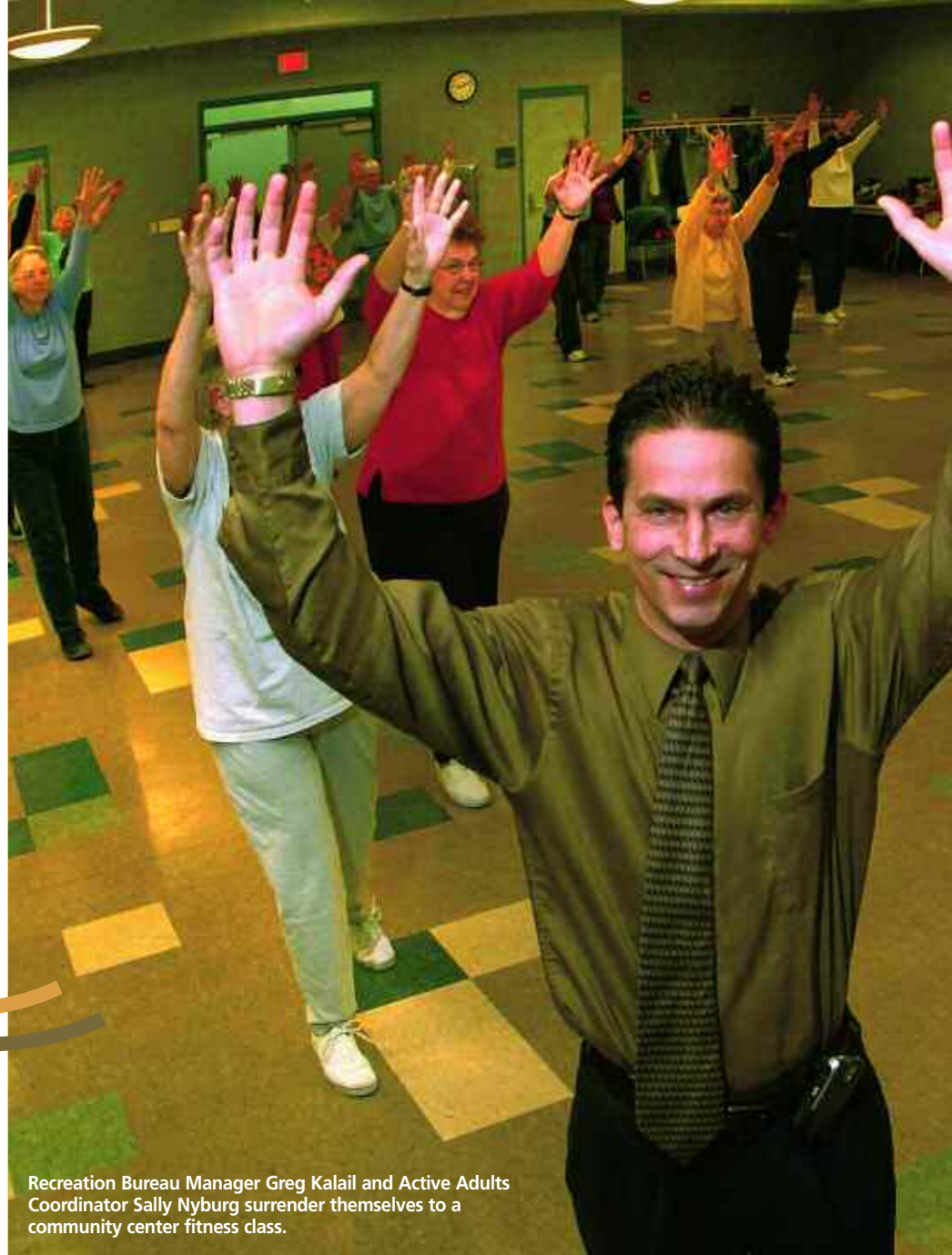
Attention Akron residents: Be on the lookout for incoming fun. There will be plenty of it, thanks to a group of

dedicated City employees.

This summer will be packed with programs and events put together by the City's Bureau of Recreation. But you don't have to call the Bureau by its official title—think of it more as your own personal Department of Cool Stuff To Do. The sole mission of the Bureau is to make certain you and other Akron residents have plenty of good times to log in your life's scrapbook.

The only real requirement for residents is simple: Show up ready for fun.

From line-dancing and computer classes to tennis leagues and trips abroad, the Bureau's programs are planned and staffed by its 35 full-time workers with support from dozens of part-time and seasonal help. They're so good at operating behind the



Recreation Bureau Manager Greg Kalail and Active Adults Coordinator Sally Nyburg surrender themselves to a community center fitness class.

scenes that you may not even realize your favorite programs are their handiwork.

"People see us at the big events like the Art Expo and the Fourth of July fireworks, but they probably don't know what we do on a daily basis," says Greg Kalail, the Bureau's manager. "We operate seven days a week, all year around."

The Bureau is split into five divisions and overall administration:

- **Community Centers** – Programming at the 14 centers, from Tai Chi to bridge, is tailored to the wants and needs of the particular neighborhoods they serve. For instance, the Northwest Center may offer a knitting class while Ellet has a lecture

series on travel. Residents are encouraged to share their desires and suggestions with center directors.

- **Community Events** – These range from the large undertakings such as the Art Expo, which drew 20,000 people last year, to smaller efforts such as the weekly downtown farmers market at Cascade Plaza, which serves downtown workers.
- **Sports and Athletics** – This group creates and manages the schedule for hundreds of games involving dozens of leagues and teams across the city. Sports range from dodge ball to tennis.
- **Active Adults** – This division was once called Older Adults, but the staff felt it



Jessica Warner in benchmarking class (left).

Ellet Community Center at Hyre Junior High (below).



LeBron James watches neighborhood kids shoot fouls at Ed Davis Community Center, (right) where the NBA star spent some of his youth.



Akron maintains Mud Run and Good Park golf courses. (below).



didn't fully describe the scope of the program. The range of activities, from backgammon to European tours, embraces varying levels of commitment and interests.

- **Golf Courses** – The City's two courses—Good Park and Mud Run—host leagues, tournaments, and group outings as well as individual play. Mud Run is home to the area's First Tee program, which exposes children from all walks of life to the game and its life lessons.

All of the Bureau's divisions share the overriding belief that making time for play is a vital part of a healthy life for an individ-


ual and a community. "Our job is to make sure everyone has the opportunities for fun, no matter their age or interests," explains Sally Nyburg, who heads up the Bureau's Active Adults division. "When someone signs on to a Recreation Bureau job, they are making an around-the-clock commitment that requires many weekend and evening hours. We tend to live and breathe what we do."

Nyburg, like most Recreation Bureau employees, has a long history in athletics, the arts and community affairs. "You have to love this job," she notes. "Otherwise, it would be too hard to handle."

Both Kalail and Nyburg say one of the

biggest rewards of their jobs is watching people enjoy the programs the staff has created and brought to fruition.

"You see people having fun, making friends—it's such a great feeling," Nyburg adds.

For more information on the Recreation Bureau's programs, log on to www.ci.akron.oh.us/rec.html, or call 330-375-2850, or contact the community center nearest you. A complete list of centers with phone numbers can be found at the above web address. 

This is



Akron's History Trails project attracted over 100 individuals and families who completed all 22 passport stops, and the Scott and Carla Davenport family, with sons Eric and Evan, picked their prize: dinner at Fire Station #4 on East Exchange Street. Joining the fire fighter feast were (l-r) Fire-medec Daniel Rosso; District Chief Dale Evans; Capt. Larry Whytsell; Lt. Doug Bjerre; Fire-medec Mike DePaul; District Chief Dennis Stoneman; and Fire-medec Brett Baldinger.

Cold Day. Warm Hearts. The first-ever Firefighters Chili Challenge at Lock 3 in January made \$1,200 for Children's Hospital Burn Unit. Judges Heather Burns (right) and Lynn Kelly (bottom) from 91.3 fm, the BJ's Lisa Abraham (far right); WAKR's Ed Esposito (lower left), and Ray Horner, with WNIR's Stan Piatt (bottom) tried all 5 chili dishes prepared by (below, l-r) Deputy Service Director Jeff Fusco, APD detective Joe Smith, Mike Kuhn and Jim Aitken of Sewer Maintenance, Karen Hague and Mari Gower of Recreation, and Firefighter Jim Diestel.



AKRON

Photos by Bruce Ford



Ellet High School's Marching Orange Men

joined with dozens of marching groups at the annual Welcome Santa parade that kicked-off two months of winter activities at Holidayfest, including the city's downtown ice rink that welcomed 25,000 skaters this season.

Akron-Canton Airport

celebrated Airtran Airways' new Florida connections by planting hundreds of pink flamingoes at several sites throughout Downtown Akron.



The Countdown to First Night at Lock 3

is believed to be the largest "advent calendar" in the United States. Artists – professionals and students alike – created giant banners that were unveiled one-a-night

between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve to create a seasonal mosaic for the winter holidays, celebrating

diversity of culture in Greater Akron.



akron performs!

2007 Summer Programs & Events Guide

Akron Arts Expo Weekend

July 26 - 29, 2007

Presented by Time Warner Cable



Saturday, July 28, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday, July 29, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Free Admission

- Quality Arts & Crafts
- Over 160 Juried Exhibitors
- Live Entertainment
- Great Food

Free Shuttle service Sat. & Sun. 9:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. from Firestone High School to Hardesty Park.

Taste of Akron

Thursday, July 26, 6:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Enjoy the full flavor of Akron with food samples from a variety of area restaurants.

Free Admission

Food samples \$2, \$4, and \$6.

Tent host sponsor: **West Point Market**

Co-sponsor: **American Wood Reface**

Arts Expo Fundraiser & Silent Auction

Friday, July 27, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

All proceeds benefit the Akron Arts Expo's artists and the children's area.

Tickets: \$40 presale, \$45 at the door. Call 330-375-2836 for tickets.

Tent host sponsor: **The Spa at Glenmoor**

Co-sponsor: **Akron Life & Leisure Magazine**

Fourth of July Fireworks Extravaganza

Be a part of the star-studded Wednesday, July 4th celebration!

- The special evening starts on the M.L.K. Jr. Freeway as Acme Fresh Market Stores present a special performance by the Don Turoso band featuring Peggy Coyle at 8 p.m.
- Then look towards the sky as the City of Akron, and Acme Fresh Market Stores light up the sky to provide an electrifying display of fireworks at 9:45 p.m., synchronized to patriotic music provided by WKDD 98.1 FM!

CONCERTS

Monday Concerts

Hardesty Park 7-9 p.m.

- June 4 Nostalgia Gold featuring Larry Alltop
- June 11 Revolution Pie
- June 18 Akron Symphony Orchestra
- June 25 LaFlavour
- July 2 The Gary Jackson Band
- July 9 Lil' Eddy & The Boilermakers
- July 16 Shout & the Legends of Motown
- July 23 B. E. Mann
- July 27-28 Ballet Theatre of Ohio, 8:45pm
- Aug. 6 45 RPM
- Aug. 13 Colin Dussault's Blues Project

Tuesday Concerts

Firestone Park 7-9 p.m.

- June 5 Colin Dussault's Blues Project
- June 12 Cats On Holiday
- June 19 Dave C & The Sharp Tones
- June 23 Akron Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 p.m.
- June 26 Walt Wise and Big 80s
- July 3 Logical Solution
- July 10 LaFlavour
- July 17 Blue Lunch
- July 31 Retrospect Motown Review
- Aug. 7 Twist
- Aug. 14 Wild Avenue
- Aug. 17-18 BalletMet, 8:45p.m.

Wednesday Concerts

Shadyside Park 7-9 p.m.

- June 6 The Prowlers
- June 13 Tony Rio & Relentless
- June 20 Eddie & The Edsels
- June 27 Karosene
- July 11 Nostalgia Gold featuring Larry Alltop
- July 18 Remember When
- Aug. 1 Cruisin'
- Aug. 8 Off the Record
- Aug. 15 November Dawn

Lunch Hour Concerts

Wednesdays @ Cascade Plaza 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

- June 6 Pizana Latin Combo
- June 13 Howard Street Blues Band
- June 20 Calypso Gypsies
- June 27 The Sharks
- July 11 Bill Smith's Music Men
- July 18 The Stingers
- Aug. 1 Mostly Blues Band
- Aug. 3-4 Groundworks Dance Company, 8:45 p.m.
- Aug. 8 Danny Mazzocco Quartet
- Aug. 15 Roland Paolucci

*Funded in part by a grant from the Music Performance Fund (MPF) arranged by the Akron Federation of Musicians, Local 24.

Thursday Concerts

Downtown @ Dusk 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Akron Art Museum

- Aug 9 Anne E. DeChant
- Aug 16 Carlos Jones and the P.L.U.S. Band
- Aug 23 Colin John Band
- Aug 30 Equals Four
- Sep 6 15-60-75 The Numbers Band
- Sep 13 The Wanda Hunt Band
- Sep 20 Horns N Things
- Sep 27 Goodmorning Valentine

Friday Concerts

Goodyear Heights Metro Park 7-9 p.m.

- June 8 ReBeats
- June 15 Brass Taxi
- June 22 The Great Pretenders
- June 29 Greased Lightnig
- July 6 Akron Symphony Orchestra, 7:30p.m.
- July 13 Blues Sisters
- July 20 Retrosomics
- Aug. 3 JiMiller Band
- Aug. 10-11 Verb Ballets, 8:45p.m.
- Aug. 17 Howard Street Blues Band

Performances

The City of Akron's 30-year tradition of presenting free dance performances during the summer will continue in 2007 and honor the legacy of the legendary founding artistic director of Ohio Ballet. The inaugural **Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival** includes four consecutive weekends of ballet featuring four professional dance companies with a nightly interactive presentation for children.

Performances begin at 8:45 on Friday and Saturday evenings, with the children's program starting at 7:45 each night:

July 27, 28

August 3, 4

August 10, 11
August 17, 18

Ballet Theatre of Ohio at Hardesty Park.
(Akron's Art Expo)
GroundWorks Dancetheater at Cascade Plaza
Verb Ballets at Goodyear Metro Park
BalletMet at Firestone Park





Time Warner Cable Stage

Lock 3 Live! is The Place to be this summer with festivals, food, fun and more!

Located next to the Akron Civic Theater in downtown Akron at 200 South Main Street. For event information and updates, visit www.lock3live.com. (330) 375.2877.

Special Events:

THE AKRON FAMILY BARBEQUE, July 4-7, features food, music, and fun, with a special Lock 3 evening performance by the **Akron Symphony Orchestra** on **Thursday, July 5**.

And everybody's favorite **Old School Soul** returns **Saturday, July 7**, featuring "United We Funk" with **Dazz Band**, **Con Funk Shun** & **Bar-Kays**.

MUFFIN DAY, Tuesday, July 17, celebrating the 20th anniversary of Main Street Gourmet for the benefit of United Way

NATIONAL HAMBURGER FESTIVAL, July 20-22

Friday The U.S. Air Force Band of Flight – 7:30 pm. FREE.

Saturday Noon to 11pm, featuring contests and a Tribute to Jimmy Buffett

Sunday Noon to 6pm, contests, music, and more

Akron Auto Showcase, August 17-18, sponsored by Rubber City Radio

WONE's Rock the Lock!

The Place to be every Friday night,
May 25 - August 31

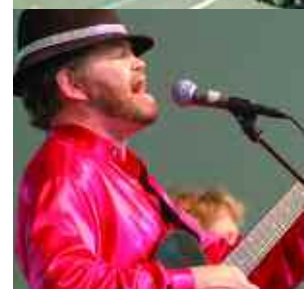
Always Free. Concerts start 7:00pm.
Music till 11.

May 25	Tributes to Rush and Ozzy Osbourne
June 1	A Tribute to Metallica
June 8	A Tribute to Bon Jovi
June 15	A Tribute to KISS
June 22	The Sound & Vision of David Bowie
June 29	A Tribute to The Doors
July 6	A Tribute to Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
July 13	A Tribute to ZZ Top
July 27	A Tribute to Bob Seger
August 3	A Tribute to The Beatles and An Evening With George Harrison
August 10	A Tribute to Jimi Hendrix
August 17	A Rolling Stones Experience
August 24	A Tribute to Led Zeppelin
August 31	A Tribute to Bruce Springsteen & Southside Johnny

Lock 3 Live! Saturdays: 7pm, unless noted*

\$5 admission with special discounts with the Do Downtown card on selected dates.
www.downtownakron.com. Admission is free for children 48 inches and under.

July 4	Survivor
July 7	Old School Soul, United We Funk *Music starts 3pm
July 14	This Is My Country! With Collin Raye
July 21	National Hamburger Festival *Music starts 2pm
July 28	Smooth Jazz Holiday: Pieces Of A Dream featuring Regina Belle
August 4	The British Are Coming with Gerry & The Pacemakers *Music starts 4pm
August 11	Heart & Soul, featuring the "Superstars of Jazz Fusion" with Roy Ayers, Lonnie Liston Smith and Wayne Henderson
August 18	70's Flashback, with Pure Prairie League and Poco
August 25	5th Annual Gospelfest, with Kim Burrell *Music starts 4pm
September 1	60's Spectacular, with Lou Christie and Lesley Gore



Lewis Miller:

19th Century Renaissance Man

Akron Inventor Left Industrial and Humanitarian Legacy.

by Dave Lieberth

Imagine the following scenarios: It is 2007 and you are standing near the Inventors Hall of Fame looking east. Off to your right is the University of Akron's new polymer lab. Now, it is the year 1874. On the horizon you can see Buchtel Hall. In front of you is the Buckeye Mower & Reaper Works, all 700,000 square feet of it—the largest manufacturing concern in Akron. Each year, 800 workers produce 26,000 pieces of farm mowing equipment, reapers, and machines that are the best in the world.

Buckeye Mower has won so many prizes at international expositions that, even in Europe and South America, Akron has become known for its high-quality manufacturing of machines, built to exacting standards.

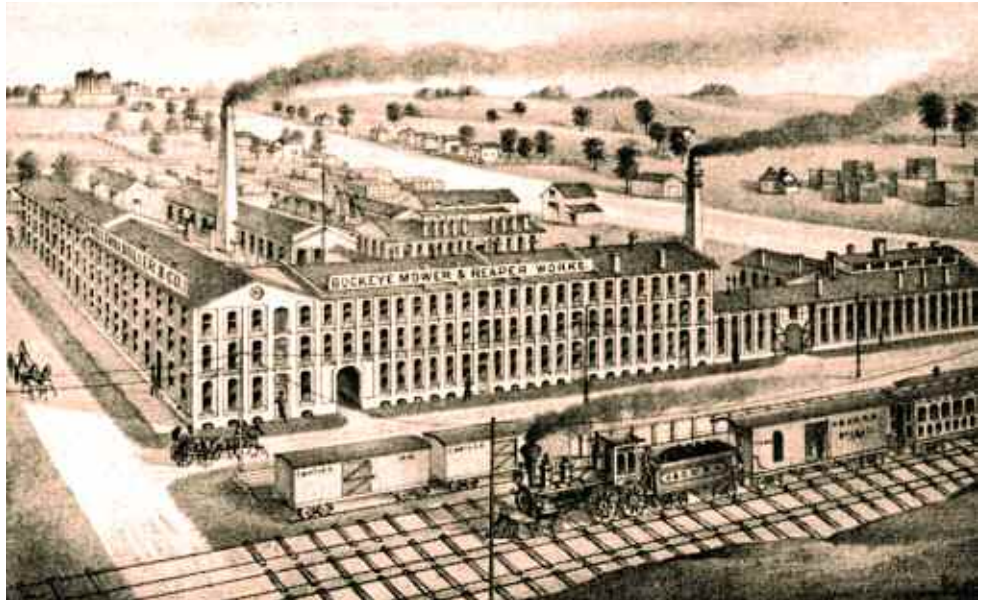


The standards are set by Lewis Miller, the superintendent of Aultman, Miller & Co., and one of Akron's most interesting personalities. Born in Greentown in 1829, he headed the Aultman firm in

Canton before relocating it to Akron in 1865.

Because he could not find steel of the quality he required for his machines, he built the Akron Rolling Mill near present-day Broadway and Bartges. The mill belched black smoke and made the sky in south Akron glow red as it produced the polished iron he required.

Lewis Miller was an inventor—inducted last year into the National Inventors Hall of Fame (www.invent.org). He was also a teacher and a writer. He saw the need to educate Bible instructors, and founded the Chautauqua Assembly near Westfield, New York, where his home—the first pre-fabri-



cated house known—was built at his Akron factory and transported by boat and wagon to the spot where it stands today.

For his beloved First Methodist Church he designed what were described as the finest Sunday School classrooms anywhere, later replicated as the “Akron Plan” around the world.

In addition to running two factories employing more than 1,200, designing churches, and founding one of America's most unique summer retreats, he found time to serve on the Akron School Board, as a trustee for Mt. Union College and the Akron Public Library, as a member of the building committee for Glendale Chapel, and as president of Akron City Council.

Lewis Miller is this author's favorite Akron historical figure. Recently, his 1925 biography was reprinted, with a foreword by inventor Thomas Edison who called Miller one of the kindest men he ever knew, and one of the least appreciated. Edison and Miller were well-acquainted: The man known as the Genius of Menlo Park married Miller's daughter Mina in 1886 in the

mansion on Oak Hill that still overlooks downtown Akron.

Miller and his industrial concerns never recovered from the economic decline known as the Panic of 1893. His factory buildings, located where E.J. Thomas Hall and the Law School stand today, were bought by International Harvester, which built trucks at the site through the 1920s. ©

Meet Lewis Miller:
Akron's 19th Century Renaissance Man, up close and personal, in a special exhibit at Akron-Summit County Public Library's Special Collections room on the 3rd floor of the Main branch, April-July. Visit www.ascpl.lib.oh.us for more information.

A Stealth Building on UA Campus

By Russ Musarra / Illustration by Chuck Ayers

The idea for today's story was born as artist Chuck Ayers drove across the East Exchange Street bridge downtown and, glancing to the north, caught sight of what looked like a Stealth fighter heading skyward.

Actually, there were two Stealth fighters—scale models built to adorn two corners of an otherwise unremarkable looking building on the west side of Wolf Ledges Parkway just north of Carroll Street on the University of Akron campus.

Ayers reminded me that the unidentified building stood on the site of the Akron Knife Works, an early manufacturer of blades for Akron's agricultural machine industry, just south of where the Buckeye Reaper & Mower Works had flourished in the 19th Century.

A parking lot off Broadway on the west bank of the railroad valley turned out to be the best vantage point for Ayers' illustration. This point was favorable because of the two yellow streaks that trailed downward from the aircrafts' tails along two sides of the building; and because the glass-walled UA Polymer Science Center loomed in the background.

If the building has an address, we didn't see it. And it bears no identifying signs, except for the gold letters "U" and "A" on a

couple of awnings.

We contacted UA publicist Dave Russ, who identified the building as the College of Engineering's 11,200-square-foot Gas Turbine Testing Facility, which was completed last December. Ted Curtis, UA's vice president for capital planning and facilities management, invited us to drop by for a tour and meet Paul Thomarios, who built the testing facility and the Stealth fighter models.

Thomarios told us he constructed the models of the Stealth F117A-Nighthawk Fighters from aluminum strong enough to withstand 150-mile winds so they'll stay put on the building.

We also learned that Thomarios has been involved in several NASA restoration projects at the Kennedy Space Center, the New York Hall of Science, and the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in New York City. He received a World War II-era Hellcat fighter and a fiberglass scale model of a Concorde for his efforts and he has decided to place them both on permanent display outside the Gas Turbine Testing Facility.

Our guide was Dr. Wieslaw Binienda, chairman of civil engineering at UA, who called the testing facility unique in a university setting and in the world. Binienda credited his colleague Dr. Jack Brown for

convincing UA President Dr. Luis M. Proenza of the need for the facility. Students are lining up to be included in the program and the aerospace industry is luring away students faster than replacements can be found. Under Brown's direction, UA engineering students test aircraft components for the U.S. Air Force, NASA and private industry.

One test simulates what happens when a jet encounters a flock of birds, which can be a hazardous occurrence. During the test, polymer material that approximates the size of a bird is shot into an engine as it is being revved up to its 63,000-rpm maximum. Compressed air is used instead of fuel to avoid explosions, and thick steel plates are hoisted as shields around testing areas, which rest on three-foot-thick concrete floors.

In one room we saw what Binienda described as a \$1 million mechanism that is being used to test bearings that are manufactured by Timken and used in General Electric aircraft engines. He also showed us two jet engines that he said were large enough to fly a DC-9. One of the engines will be used in a test to develop a lighter and stronger material for engine blades. ©

Russ Musarra may be reached at rmusarra@neo.rr.com.



Area Firms Show Commitment to Akron Plan to Invest \$80 Million in New Projects

By Mark Williamson

In the last days of 2006 and in the first few months of 2007, Akron businesses announced more than \$80 million in new projects that will create new jobs and keep existing jobs in Akron.

In March, two prominent Akron companies made long-term commitments to the City.

FirstEnergy Corp., which is based in downtown Akron and is one of the nation's largest energy companies, announced plans to invest \$20 million and add 200,000 square feet of new office space on a 150-acre campus bordered by West Market Street and White Pond Drive. The complex will retain 700 jobs in the new FirstEnergy Information Technology Group and the



FirstEnergy Corp's proposed new office campus at White Pond

FirstEnergy Solutions subsidiary.

FirstEnergy CEO and President Anthony Alexander credits Mayor Don Plusquellic's support for making it possible. "We strongly support our hometown of Akron," said Alexander. "It is a great place for our people to live and work."

FirstEnergy also plans to expand its presence downtown, while the City itself announced plans for a new \$12 million parking deck that will serve FirstEnergy and other expanding businesses.

Sterling Jewelers, Inc. announced its own long-term commitment to keeping its headquarters in Akron. One of the region's top five employers and a division of the largest specialty retail jeweler in the world, Sterling got its start as LeRoy's Jewelers in 1910 in downtown Akron. It now operates

1,307 stores in all 50 states and employs more than 15,000.

Sterling plans to invest more than \$1 billion into the business in the next five years. CEO Mark Light said the support of the Akron community and its leaders has been "essential" to its success.

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Akron-based **ASW Global** has become one of the largest minority-owned business-



**Andre Thornton steps up to plate at ASW Global** es in Ohio, with the addition of Cleveland Indians baseball great Andre Thornton as its new majority owner.

ASW Global's former owner Phil Maynard continues to hold a minority position with the company, which helps retailers worldwide with supply chain management. In announcing the new leadership transition in January, Thornton said Greater Akron provides an "exceptional environment for business growth" in his industry.

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In downtown Akron, two nationally ranked hospitals are joining together in the City's newly designated Biomedical Corridor to create a new long-term acute care (LTAC) hospital. Serving the needs of **Akron General Medical Center** and **Summa Health System**, the \$19 million facility will employ 170 medical professionals. The new structure will be built on East Market Street at Prospect, the site of the old Taylor Pontiac dealership, which the City

purchased and land-banked in hopes of attracting development to the site.

Adjacent to the new hospital is Akron's 1929 Main Post Office, known in recent years as the Charles Mayer building. Akron development firm Legacy LLC will oversee a \$10 million retrofit of the structure for Summa Health System, which will house 200 employees in its technical and information services operations.

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Akron attracted the attention in February of the world's largest tire mold maker. **Saehwa Machinery Co. Ltd.** of South Korea will add 150 jobs in Akron with its purchase of Universal Tire Molds, its first North American investment. Saehwa plans to invest \$2 million in a state-of-the-art 45,000-square-foot manufacturing center in the Akron-Springfield Township Joint Economic Development District.

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In March, **Signet Development** announced the relocation of its offices from Akron's Carnegie Library Building to a brand new office tower on South Main Street next to the Federal Building. Signet also plans to add 100 jobs. Owner Tony Manna said Signet will invest up to \$15 million for what could be a five-story building between Chase Bank and the Federal Building.

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Work continues on five historic buildings north of the Akron Civic Theater, where **Main Street Partners** are investing \$15 million to create new restaurants, clubs, and cafes along with offices and 33 market-rate apartments. The City completed asbestos removal and interior demolition earlier this year as well as demolition of the Landmark parking deck, which will open up the Ohio & Erie Canal at Bowery Street for the first time in a century. ©



**Akron's proposed new long-term acute care (LTAC) hospital.**





# The Town Crier

by Russ Musarra

## HONING IN ON SOME CAREER MILESTONES

It's impossible to chronicle the careers of everyone who retires from service to the City of Akron. But, occasionally, when the Town Crier learns about some whose work changed the City, we happily share their stories.



When **CHARLES GLADMAN** retired as Akron fire chief, he had chalked up 34 years of service that included training veterans as well as recruits, running the department's apprenticeship program, and working

on officer development. Gladman's career began in 1973. Six years later he was promoted to lieutenant. He became captain and Fire Training Academy training officer in 1986, deputy chief six years later, and was appointed fire chief in 1997. Along the way he also headed the Emergency Medical Services and Fire Prevention Bureaus, and earned a Fire Science degree from the University of Akron.

Retiring deputy law director **JAMES E. PAYNE** concludes 20 years' City service. He was also an assistant prosecutor. Payne had practiced law for 30 years. He earned his law degree from the University of Akron and served in the Army as a first lieutenant from 1965 to 1968. He is a past president of the Akron Bar Association, a member of the Akron Barristers Association, and a life member of the Akron branch of the NAACP and the School of Law Alumni Association.

Variety has been the spice of **PAM HAFFNER**'s 32-year City career. She's retiring from the Finance Department's Assessments Division, where she has worked since 1988. Haffner joined the city in 1975. After serving in the Health Department mail room, she was an Engineering Department aide, a Water Department Engineering Division drafter



and a Police Department radio room communications technician before becoming an assessment and licensing agent. She became a supervisor in 1992 and was promoted to assessor/alarm administrator in February 2001. She was the first member of the Keep Akron Beautiful clean team and one of three employees who started the City's Plans & Permit Center. She was the City's loaned executive to the United Way Campaign and a volunteer lunch server at the Haven of Rest.



**BILL HAHN** may have retired as City arborist and horticulturalist but he's coming back as a part-time seasonal employee to help finish the expressway beautification project and fill the 25,000 street tree

sites. Hahn joined the City as a landscape specialist in 1974, moved up to landscape designer and became arborist and horticulturalist in 1993. He says his proudest accomplishment is proving that expressway noise could be reduced more effectively by using earth mounding and plant material than by using concrete sound walls. He estimates he has overseen the planting of at least 30,000 trees around Akron. By diversifying the species of trees, he helped put a stop to the problem of trees lost to disease or pests.

Nearly 1,000 homes were renovated during **WARREN WALLFISH**'s tenure as Akron's housing rehabilitation manager. Wallfish's job was a balancing act of stretching the ever-shrinking U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds while living up to Mayor **DON PLUSQUELLIC**'s vision of better and newer housing throughout the City.



Bringing electric, heating and plumbing up to current code and making sure homes were sound and free of lead were Wallfish's chief goals. Off the job, he has been an active participant in the Akron Reads literacy program and loves playing golf.

**GERALD HOLLAND** retired as public service director after serving as the Mayor's Deputy Mayor for Labor Relations, a post he was appointed to in 2000. Previously, he served as president of the Ohio Association of Professional Firefighters from 1982 to 1988 and vice president of the International Association of Firefighters, representing 590 locals in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Illinois.

Succeeding Holland as public service director is **RICHARD A. MEROLLA**, appointed to the post by Mayor Plusquellic



in March. He was the City's finance director from 1993 to 1996, when he left City Hall to join the private sector. Merolla is a 1972 Cleveland State University graduate and earned his masters degree from the London School of Economics. He returns to the City after serving as chief operating officer of the Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs law firm since 2000. He has headed the Summit County Port Authority board, been a trustee of Haven of Rest Ministries and Foundation, and is a Leadership Akron graduate. Since 2005, he has been the appointed alternate to the Akron City Planning Commission. 

## Alexander Park Restored to 19th Century Elegance


Keep Akron Beautiful's most popular public beautification site is the restored Neptune Park on West Market Street, now called Alexander Park. In the summer of 2001, KAB Flowerscape Director Polly Kaczmarek started working on a vision to restore the City's first designated park to its appearance at the turn of the 19th century, complete with a fountain and ironwork. A popular site for wedding photos, the park along its North Street edge contains Liberty Garden, which honors the victims of September 11, 2001, and is planted in red, white and blue flowers every year.

With funding from the Akron Garden Club, a new landscape plan for Alexander Park was presented by R.G. Thomas Landscape Design. The Men's Garden Club of Akron donated funds for new plantings, while the park's corporate neighbors, Williams Hardwood Flooring, Labels & Letters, and Van Devere, Inc. also provided support. Looking towards 2007, plans have been proposed to dismantle the fountain and repaint the fountain and benches in time for the summer season. 



## Akron Seed Packets are Back! Time to Get Growing!

You can Keep (a little bit of) Akron Beautiful — your own yard or apartment window box — by using the flower seeds enclosed with this issue of CITY magazine. Once again, the City is distributing seeds to every household in Akron, and this year, instead of Zinnias, we chose the red, white, and blue Akron Aster mix for your consideration.

Sometime after May 8, sow the seeds in a sunny location 1/8 inch deep. As they germinate, thin plants to 12 inches apart. And look for blossoms right around Independence Day. And don't forget to celebrate the 4th of July with us at the Akron Family Barbeque on Main Street at Lock 3 park, accompanied by the best fireworks anywhere. 



## Win a \$10,000 Landscape Makeover


*Proceeds benefit the KAB Flowerscape Program*

Summit County property owners can enter the Keep Akron Beautiful 2007 Dreamscape Raffle, and take a chance at winning a professionally designed front or back yard makeover valued at \$10,000.

This year, R. B. Stout Inc. will be the lead landscape design team, while 22 partners will donate expertise, goods, and services to create the winner's dream landscape.

All sales from the raffle will be used to fund the Keep Akron Beautiful Flowerscape program.

Flowerscape incorporates more than 34,000 plants, which are planned, installed, and maintained in professionally designed flowerbeds by KAB crews.

Purchase tickets (\$25 each or five tickets for \$100) at Dayton Nurseries, Donzell's Garden Center, Graf Growers, Hoffman's Garden Center, KB Compost, Inc., Suncrest Gardens, The Henry Bierce Co., or West Hill Hardware. Only 1,500 tickets will be sold. For information, call Keep Akron Beautiful at 330-375-2116 or visit [www.keepakronbeautiful.org](http://www.keepakronbeautiful.org). 



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After

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